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General and complete disarmament

Letter dated 23 September 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit a communiqué (see annex) issued on 13 September by the Foreign Ministers of the New Agenda Coalition countries (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden) following a meeting in which the Ministers reviewed progress on their joint initiative, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

I would be grateful if you would kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 66: "General and complete disarmament".

(*Signed*) Richard **Ryan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 23 September 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Ministerial Declaration by the New Agenda Coalition in the margins of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly

13 September 2002

The Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden, meeting at the fifty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly, reviewed developments on nuclear disarmament.

The New Agenda Ministers expressed their dissatisfaction at the lack of progress in implementing the undertakings made by States Parties at the 2000 Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The New Agenda Ministers reaffirmed their view that the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons is incompatible with the non-proliferation regime and with the broader goal of promoting international peace and security.

Ministers acknowledged that reductions in the numbers of deployed strategic nuclear warheads envisaged by the Treaty of Moscow represent a positive step in the process of nuclear de-escalation between the United States of America and the Russian Federation. At the same time, they stressed that reductions in the deployment and operational status of nuclear weapons cannot be a substitute for irreversible cuts in, and the total elimination of, these weapons.

They expressed concern at new approaches to the broader role of nuclear weapons as part of security strategies, including the development of new types of weapons.

The New Agenda Ministers urged the international community to intensify its efforts to achieve universal adherence to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. They called on India, Pakistan and Israel to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear weapons States and to place their facilities under comprehensive International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

Ministers stressed that the current cycle for review of the Treaty would need to take stock of the implementation of the commitments of the 1995 and 2000 review conferences.

In this regard, they recalled the position paper which the New Agenda Coalition had submitted to the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty and looked forward to developing the ideas contained therein.

To contribute further to the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the Foreign Ministers announced their intention to table a draft resolution at the current session of the General Assembly. They expressed the hope that the resolution would attract widespread support.

The Ministers of the New Agenda Coalition announced that they would also be submitting a specific draft resolution to the General Assembly on prioritizing further cuts in non-strategic nuclear weapons.